

ABSTRACT

A zero-turning-radius power lawn mower for operation by a standing-occupant includes first and second independently driven and controlled rear drive wheels mounted on separate drive axles. A riding platform for supporting the standing-occupant or operator is located between the first and second rear drive wheels. The rear drive wheels are independently driveable in both the forward and reverse directions at variable speeds so as to allow for substantially zero-radius-turning of the mower about a central turning point. The riding platform is positioned at this turning point so that the standing-occupant remains substantially unaffected by centrifugal force created during approximate zero-radius-turning of the mower thereby allowing the mower to take such turns at higher speeds. Such positioning of the platform also provides for improved maneuverability, reduces the likelihood that the platform will bottom out when the mower goes over bumps, and creates a safer mower less susceptible to tipping due to the resulting low center of gravity. The low center of gravity created by the position of the riding platform for the standing-operator also results in the mower having improved traction and being less likely to pop "wheelies" upon acceleration.